


Ancient Egypt Timeline

By Dr John Baines

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/timeline.shtml>

Years	Periods / Dynasties	Main events
3100-2950 BC	Late Predynastic Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earliest known hieroglyphic writing • Foundation of the Egyptian state
2950-2575 BC	Early Dynastic Period (1st-3rd Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the capital city of Memphis • Intensive contact with Palestine • The first pyramid is built - the Step Pyramid at Saqqara
2575-2150 BC	Old Kingdom (4th-8th Dynasties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Pyramids are built at Dahshur and Giza • Pyramids and elite tombs include the first extensive inscriptions
2125-1975 BC	1st Intermediate Period (9th-11th Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egypt splits into two smaller states, ruled from Memphis in the north and Thebes in the south
1975-1640 BC	Middle Kingdom (11th-14th Dynasties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentuhotep reunites Egypt • Amenemhat I founds a new royal residence near Memphis • Egypt conquers Lower Nubia under Senwosret I and III • Classical period of art and literature
1630- 1520 BC	2nd Intermediate Period (15th-17th Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyksos kings seize power in the north • Theban 17th dynasty in the south
1539-1075 BC	New Kingdom (18th-20th Dynasties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egyptian empire in Near East and Nubia • Elaborate tombs of the Valley of Kings • Rule of woman pharaoh Hatshepsut • King Akhenaten attempts to introduce a monotheistic religion • Brief reign of Tutankhamun • Ramesses II rules for 67 years

1075-715 BC	3rd Intermediate Period (21st-25th Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disunity and Libyan settlement in Egypt • Nubians conquer Egypt (late 8th century)
715-332 BC	Late Period (20th-30th Dynasties, 2nd Persian Period)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egypt conquered briefly by Assyrians • Cultural revival under kings from Sais • Persian conquest of Egypt (525 BC) • Egypt independent again (404-343 BC)
332 BC-395 AD	Greco-Roman Period (Macedonians, Ptolemies, and Romans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexander the Great occupies Egypt • Alexander's general, Ptolemy, becomes king and founds a dynasty • The Rosetta Stone is carved (196 BC) • Cleopatra VII reigns (51-30 BC) • Egypt becomes a province of the Roman Empire (30 BC)

About this timeline

The dates are calculated from ancient lists, especially the Turin royal papyrus, and from various other sources. The margin of error rises from a decade or so in the 3rd Intermediate Period and New Kingdom to perhaps 150 years for the 1st Dynasty; dates for the 3rd millennium are given for whole dynasties and are rounded, as are numerous later dates. From the 12th Dynasty on, possible sequences of dates can be calculated from astronomical evidence; currently accepted sequences are used here. Dates from 664 BCE on are precise to within a year.

About the author

The timeline was compiled by John Baines, Professor of Egyptology, University of Oxford. He is co-author with Jaromir Malek of *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (2nd edition, 2000) and author of *Fecundity figures: Egyptian personification and the iconology of a genre* (reprinted 2001)